



**MEMORANDUM**  
**OFFICE OF THE MAYOR**

**Not On**  
**Agenda Item No. 2B1**

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To: Honorable Chairperson and Members  
Board of County Commissioners

Date: **April 13, 2004**

From: Alex Penelas  
Mayor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alex Penelas", is written over the printed name.

Subject: Item 7G2A – Resolution  
relating to the Section 8  
Housing Choice Voucher  
Program

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I encourage the Board to support Agenda Item 7G2A, which is on today's Commission meeting agenda. This resolution urges the President and the United States Congress to refrain from drastically reducing or cutting the important "Section 8" housing voucher choice program.

According to the proposed President's budget, this low-income housing assistance program would be cut by approximately \$1 billion below the 2004 level and reduce the program's funding in subsequent years even further. The budget recommends changes in the structure of the Section 8 program by, among other changes, replacing the program with a block grant to local housing agencies. These cuts would force local housing agencies, such as our Miami-Dade Housing Agency, to make some damaging policy decisions that could result in our low-income families being adversely affected.

There are approximately 87,000 Housing Choice Vouchers in the State of Florida. If the President's budget is approved, it is estimated that over 10,000 families in the State will be cut from this vital program. Miami-Dade Housing Agency (MDHA) would have their funding reduced by \$12,148,728 in 2005 and \$32,374,396 in 2009, if the cuts are distributed proportionately among state and local housing agencies across the country. Local voucher assistance in the County will have to shrink by close to 30% percent by 2009, at a time when the shortage of affordable housing is expected to continue growing. The effect of this will be to displace hundreds of families in Miami-Dade County that so desperately rely on this housing assistance.

The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program was created to allow very low-income (50% or less of the local median income) individuals and families to rent on the private market using vouchers to cover a portion of the monthly rent. The President's cuts would undermine the integrity of the program and put the County's most vulnerable residents at risk. I urge the Board to support Item 7G2A to ensure that the critical Section 8 continues to be fully funded so that our low-income families, elderly, and disabled individuals can receive the housing assistance they need.

cc: The Honorable Harvey Ruvin, Clerk of Courts  
Robert A. Ginsburg, County Attorney  
George Burgess, County Manager